



The Critical Years: 10-15

Our Community. Our Children. Our Commitment.

THE CRITICAL YEARS: 10-15 **Promoting Positive Development in Youth***

After serving Flint and Genesee County for more than 60 years, the National Center for Community Education (NCCE) desired to leave a legacy to the community it had called home. At the behest of the NCCE Board of Trustees, the Center for Collaboration and the Future of Schooling (CCFS) involved a NCCE Community Discussion Group which determined that the legacy would be a manifesto from the community pledging to support young people 10 to 15 years of age.

In order to gather the community's input, NCCE approached Community Challenge to involve a broad cross section of the community in identifying and prioritizing issues that lead to actions. Community Challenge then convened "The Critical Years: 10 to 15" committee to determine the status and needs of 10 to 15 year olds in our community.

Using an asset based or positive youth development approach, the Critical Years committee used results of a comprehensive study of over 10,000 10 to 15 year old youth in all 21 districts in Genesee County, focus groups of over 200 youth and a countywide Town Hall meeting in order to create a better understanding of youth needs and the community's ability to respond to those needs.

Four focal points to promote the success of youth were clearly identified from this work and detailed in the White Paper*:

1. Strengthen youth programs offered in the community
2. Promote more positive experiences for youth in the K-12 educational system
3. Provide supports for families
4. Promote safe environments for youth

Priority Children, as a neutral convener, will provide on-going leadership, coordination, and collaboration on the identified issues. They will bring key educators, parents, concerned citizens, business, faith and community leaders together with agencies and service providers to plan, identify and implement strategies and actions to support existing services and promote changes that will make improvements for 10 to 15 year old youth and their families.

**Promoting Positive Youth Development in Youth Ages 10-15 in Genesee County White Paper can be downloaded from the website.*



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